

15 January 1976

NSA review completed

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, WORKING GROUP ON DCI POLICY CONCERNING
TRAVEL AND ASSIGNMENT OF PERSONNEL WITH SCI ACCESS

SUBJECT: Proposed DCI Security Policy Concerning Travel and Assignment
of Personnel with Access to Sensitive Compartmented Information

1. We do not concur in the proposed policy paper because it would permit unrestricted travel to or through countries identified as posing security risks by personnel with knowledge of sensitive intelligence merely by giving advance notice and being afforded a defensive briefing. We do not think that this proposal can satisfy one aspect of the statutory responsibility of the Director of Central Intelligence to provide for the protection of intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure.

2. There is no disagreement that travel to Communist-controlled countries poses a security risk because of the potential for provocation, detainment, capture and interrogation of personnel with sensitive access. It does not seem consistent to us to postulate this security risk and then not to impose proper safeguards to counter the risk, namely, controlling and restricting such travel where required. Removal of controls and restrictions would only increase the risk, not reduce it, no matter how extensively the persons are briefed. We consider the defensive security briefing worthwhile but it is no panacea and cannot dispel the basic risk. Despite the aura of detente, there has been no diminishing of the risk and threat in travel to Communist Bloc countries. This is documented in the 1974 Security Committee "Study of Harrassments and Provocations." Many of the cases in this study, and there are others known to the intelligence community, concern professional people, experienced and familiar with the pitfalls and ruses of hostile intelligence. Yet, that did not protect them from being subjected to provocation and interrogation. We are equally concerned with the entrapment and "friendly" interrogation of personnel, with possible blackmail and recruitment, which could result in serious compromise of sensitive information that may not even become known.

3. The argument has also been made that the current policy, which imposes restrictions on travel to or through areas of risk, is an administrative burden and is ineffective because it is regularly waived. We have seen no precise evidence to convince us that the administration of the present policy is that much of a burden, and our own experience does not indicate it to be a problem at all. And, the reputed ineffectiveness of the policy is not based on its validity but on the inadequate enforcement of it. Therefore, we do not consider these arguments as persuasive or sufficient to compel a change to the existing policy. We believe that the present policy provides sufficient flexibility to USIB members to regulate official and unofficial travel of its personnel and, more importantly, provides for the special security precautions essential to the integrity of intelligence and intelligence sources.

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